

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Withdrawn) A therapeutic and/or preventive agent for inner ear disorders comprising an IL-6 antagonist as an active ingredient.
2. (Withdrawn) The therapeutic and/or preventive agent according to claim 1 wherein said inner ear disorders are sensorineural hearing loss.
3. (Withdrawn) The therapeutic and/or preventive agent according to claim 2 wherein said sensorineural hearing loss is sensorineural hearing loss caused by Meniere's disease, drug-induced inner ear disorders, viral inner ear disorders, purulent inner ear disorders, temporal bone fracture or acoustic nerve tumor.
4. (Withdrawn) The therapeutic and/or preventive agent according to claim 2 wherein said sensorineural hearing loss is sudden deafness, senile deafness or noise deafness.
5. (Withdrawn) The therapeutic and/or preventive agent according to claim 1 wherein said inner ear disorders are vestibular disorders.
6. (Withdrawn) The therapeutic and/or preventive agent according to claim 5 wherein said vestibular disorders are vestibular disorders caused by Meniere's disease, vestibular neuronitis or drug-induced inner ear disorders.
7. (Withdrawn) The therapeutic and/or preventive agent according to claim 1 wherein said IL-6 antagonist is an antibody against IL-6 receptor.
8. (Withdrawn) The therapeutic and/or preventive agent according to claim 7 wherein said antibody against IL-6 receptor is a monoclonal antibody against IL-6 receptor.
9. (Withdrawn) The therapeutic and/or preventive agent according to claim 8 wherein said antibody against IL-6 receptor is a monoclonal antibody against human IL-6 receptor.

10. (Withdrawn) The therapeutic and/or preventive agent according to claim 8 wherein said antibody against IL-6 receptor is a monoclonal antibody against mouse IL-6 receptor.

11. (Withdrawn) The therapeutic and/or preventive agent according to claim 7 wherein said antibody against IL-6 receptor is a recombinant antibody.

12. (Withdrawn) The therapeutic and/or preventive agent according to claim 9 wherein said monoclonal antibody against human IL-6 receptor is PM-1 antibody.

13. (Withdrawn) The therapeutic and/or preventive agent according to claim 10 wherein said monoclonal antibody against mouse IL-6 receptor is MR16-1 antibody.

14. (Withdrawn) The therapeutic and/or preventive agent according to claim 7 wherein said antibody against IL-6 receptor is a chimeric antibody, a humanized antibody, or a human antibody against IL-6 receptor.

15. (Withdrawn) The therapeutic and/or preventive agent according to claim 14 wherein said humanized antibody against IL-6 receptor is a humanized PM-1 antibody.

16. – 30. (Cancelled)

31. (Currently Amended) A method for treating an inner ear disorder of a subject ~~which comprises~~ comprising administering an IL-6 antagonist anti-interleukin-6 (anti-IL-6) receptor antibody to a subject in need thereof, wherein the anti-IL-6 receptor antibody binds to an IL-6 receptor, blocks signal transduction by IL-6 and inhibits the biological activity of IL-6 to the subject.

32. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 31 wherein said inner ear disorder is sensorineural hearing loss.

33. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 32 wherein said sensorineural hearing loss is sensorineural hearing loss caused by Meniere's disease, drug-induced inner ear disorders, viral inner ear disorders, purulent inner ear disorders, temporal bone fracture or acoustic nerve tumor.

34. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 32 wherein said sensorineural hearing loss is sudden deafness, senile deafness or noise deafness.

35. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 31 wherein said inner ear disorder is a vestibular disorder.

36. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 35 wherein said vestibular disorder is caused by Meniere's disease, vestibular neuronitis or is a drug-induced inner ear disorder.

37. (Canceled).

38. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 37 wherein said antibody is a monoclonal antibody against an IL-6 receptor.

39. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 38 wherein said antibody is a monoclonal antibody against a human IL-6 receptor.

40. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 38 wherein said antibody is a monoclonal antibody against a mouse IL-6 receptor.

41. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 37 wherein said antibody is a recombinant antibody.

42. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 39 wherein said monoclonal antibody is a PM-1 antibody.

43. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 40 wherein said monoclonal antibody is a MR16-1 antibody.

44. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 37 wherein said antibody is a chimeric antibody, a humanized antibody, or a human antibody against IL-6 receptor.

45. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 44 wherein said humanized antibody is a humanized PM-1 antibody.